

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

- 1 1. A method, comprising:
 - 2 identifying a combination of fields in a header of an internet protocol version 4
 - 3 (hereinafter IPv4) packet, wherein the combination is dynamically modifiable;
 - 4 and
 - 5 utilizing the combination of fields to classify the IPv4 packet.
- 1 2. The method according to claim 1, further comprising:
 - 2 a. constructing a key according to information in a key construction register;
 - 3 b. identifying a tag that corresponds to the key from a table of key-tag entries in
 - 4 a memory device; and
 - 5 c. inserting the tag in the header of IPv4 packet in accordance to information in
 - 6 a tag insertion register.
 - 7
- 1 3. The method according to claim 2, wherein the information in the key
 - 2 construction register indicates a retrieval location in the header of IPv4 packet

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1 4. The method according to claim 2, wherein the information in the tag insertion
2 register indicates a number of bits to retrieve from the tag and an insertion
3 location in the header of IPv4 packet to insert the tag.

1 6. The broadband engine according to claim 5, the transceiver module further

2 a. collects a portion of incoming packets; and

3 b. appends control information to the collected portion.

- 1 7. The broadband engine according to claim 5, the lookup module further
2 comprising:
- 3 a. a plurality of registers to contain key construction information and tag
4 insertion information from the external central processing unit; and
- 5 b. the processing core to construct a key according to the key construction
6 information, retrieve a tag that corresponds to the key from the external
7 content adjustable memory and insert the tag in a header of one of the
8 packets based on the tag insertion information.
- 1 8. The broadband engine according to claim 7, wherein the key construction
2 information further comprises:
- 3 a retrieval location in the header of IPv4 packet and a number of bits from the
4 retrieval location to consider in constructing the key.
- 1 9. The broadband engine according to claim 7, wherein the tag insertion
2 information further comprises:
- 3 a number of bits to retrieve from the tag and an insertion location in the header
4 of IPv4 packet to insert the tag.
- 1 10. A line card, comprising:

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- 2 an input/output interface;
- 3 a switch fabric interface to communicate with a switch fabric; and
- 4 a broadband engine, coupled to the input/output interface and the switch fabric
- 5 interface, further including:
- 6 a. a transceiver module to receive a plurality of packets from the input/output
- 7 interface; and
- 8 b. a lookup module, coupled to an external content adjustable memory, the
- 9 transceiver module and an external processor, further including:
- 10 a processing core to classify an internet protocol version 4
- 11 (hereinafter IPv4) packet by utilizing a dynamically modifiable
- 12 combination of fields in a header of the IPv4 packet.
- 13 11. The line card according to claim 10, the transceiver module further
- 14 a. collects a portion of incoming packets; and
- 15 b. appends control information to the collected portion.
- 1 12. The line card according to claim 10, the lookup module further comprising:
- 2 a. a plurality of registers to contain key construction information and tag
- 3 insertion information from the external central processing unit; and
- 4 b. the processing core to construct a key according to the key construction
- 5 information, retrieve a tag that corresponds to the key from the external

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6 content adjustable memory and insert the tag in a header of one of the
7 packets based on the tag insertion information.

1 13. The line card according to claim 12, wherein the key construction
2 information further comprises:
3 a retrieval location in the header of IPv4 packet and a number of bits from the
4 retrieval location to consider in constructing the key.

1 14. The line card according to claim 12, wherein the tag insertion information
2 further comprises:
3 a number of bits to retrieve from the tag and an insertion location in the header
4 of IPv4 packet to insert the tag.

1 15. A communication system, comprising:
2 a. a switch fabric;
3 b. a main processing engine with an processor; and
4 c. a line card, coupled to the switch fabric via a switch fabric interface, further
5 including:
6 an input/output interface;

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- 7 a broadband engine, coupled to the input/output interface and the switch
8 fabric interface, further comprising:
9 i. a transceiver module to receive a plurality of packets from the
10 input/output interface; and
11 ii. a lookup module, coupled to an external content adjustable
12 memory, the transceiver module and the processor, further
13 including:
14 a processing core to classify an internet protocol version 4
15 (hereinafter IPv4) packet by utilizing a dynamically modifiable
16 combination of fields in a header of the IPv4 packet.

- 1 16. The communication system according to claim 15, the transceiver module
2 further
3 a. collects a portion of incoming packets; and
4 b. appends control information to the collected portion.

- 1 17. The communication system according to claim 15, the lookup module further
2 comprising:
3 a. a plurality of registers to contain key construction information and tag
4 insertion information from the external central processing unit; and

- 5 b. the processing core to construct a key according to the key construction
6 information, retrieve a tag that corresponds to the key from the external
7 content adjustable memory and insert the tag in a header of one of the
8 packets based on the tag insertion information.

- 1 18. The communication system according to claim 17, wherein the key
2 construction information further comprises:
3 a retrieval location in the header of IPv4 packet and a number of bits from the
4 retrieval location to consider in constructing the key.

- 1 19. The communication system according to claim 17, wherein the tag insertion
2 information further comprises:
3 a number of bits to retrieve from the tag and an insertion location in the header
4 of IPv4 packet to insert the tag.

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